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Poems

Stephen Gray

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Poems

Abstract

Listen to them talk and Divers, reunion Island

Stephen Gray

LISTEN TO THEM TALK

What are they saying?
those fashionable nudes with beads on their necks
handprints around their boobs & rum cocktails
about the wages of sin
what are they saying now?

What are they saying?
those coral-sweepers of the Club Med
raking up the bones of the broken reef
about the dog-shit on the lawn
what are they saying now?

What are they saying?
the surf-sail rider & his leaning mast
the frogman & his elongated flipper
about the credit & the loss
what are they saying now?

What are they saying now?
the acting vice-consul from Pretoria
& the cancer victim in her nylon wig
about Soweto 76
what are they saying now?

& what are they saying?
the parrot-fish & angel-fish & prawns
now that the tide has begun to turn on them
now that the tide has turned
what are they saying now?

DIVERS, REUNION ISLAND

From the concrete jetty jump
 one two ten children
into a pale space out of gravity
 buckle like hinges on
impact with the bomb-shell sea —
 a zone of volleyballs &
belly-flops & inflated tubes
 is claimed by each of them —
despite their various-coloured origins
 the thrust across the open sky
the plunge over the sloppy wave
 grabs them down the same —
& the preteen muscle games always
 land in nuzzles down the reef
& gasps & bursting salty eyes —
 they wade ashore glistening —
the dark prefect points in a child
 kicked beyond the perimeter —
the tame black half-Alsatian dog
 charges with a new batch brakes
as they go over holding noses hands air
 aloft & legs awry before they
crash inevitably downwards yet again —
 one girl's hair pulls across
the peel of the lagoon like a spider —
 the less defiant contemplate
the fish beneath the squeaking lilo
 whose eyes enlarge such beings
into the dumb thunder of invasion —
 the black dog barks decides
the golden-headed baby may prop
 her small bikinied hip on his
warm fur his over-excited side —
 there is no end to children
diving off the jetty evermore
 no end to shaping summer
in your own image perpetually.